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Amy Cameron, Consultant  
Executive Office  
California Department of Education  
1430 N Street, Suite 5602  
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

My son, [REDACTED], is senior at [REDACTED] High School. [REDACTED] maintains a solid grade point average of 2.64, while working a part time job, fixing up his '58 Chevy, dating his high school sweetheart and volunteering with landscape design at our home. But there's something else about [REDACTED] that is important to know: he is a special education student. So that means he is one of these kids that has been relegated to the status of human guinea pigs for the Exit Exam. That means that although he passed the English portion of the exam and is a mere seven points away from passing the math portion, he may be denied what is rightfully his: a high school diploma.

Since I am [REDACTED] "voice," there several points that must be considered:

- [REDACTED]'s inability to reach a passing score on the Exit Exam reflects a system failure – failure to provide equal access to educational content as well as a failure to implement an authentic Individualized Education Plan on [REDACTED]'s behalf.
- [REDACTED] school district also failed to apply for the emergency funds made available to school districts to provide remedial assistance to students, like [REDACTED], who had not yet passed the Exit Exam. Because of that, I have been forced to pay for private, weekly tutoring for [REDACTED] since August of this year
- A one-size-fits-all assessment of cumulative learning is inherently discriminatory toward all the "square pegs" that do not fit into the "round holes." As a special education student, [REDACTED] is guaranteed **individualized education, which includes assessment**. By insisting that [REDACTED] demonstrate understanding of the educational content in a way that he is unable to access is like removing the wheelchair ramp from the graduation ceremony and saying, "It's too bad you can't get into the ceremony like the other kids, but rules are rules and you can't graduate. Oh, and sorry about your missing legs."
- Reasonable alternatives should have been studied, selected and implemented prior to [REDACTED]'s senior year. A fine example of an effective assessment is the creation of a student portfolio. Portfolios are a common method used as a final assessment for intern teachers to receive the preliminary credential; thus, California already accepts this form of assessment as it relates to an individual meeting a set of "standards." However, as of yet, there are no alternatives for the Exit Exam. Since at this late point in the year it would be impossible to professionally analyze, select and implement alternatives for the Class of 2006, the entire class must be exempted from the Exit Exam pass requirement. Unless and until

alternative forms of assessment are selected and tested, any and all negative consequences to students must be unilaterally delayed.

In closing, I want you to understand that [REDACTED] has suffered enormous emotional and psychological trauma because of this fiasco called the Exit Exam. His entire senior year has been ruined because of the "threat" superimposed upon him due to his status as a special education student who has had the ramp to graduation knocked out from under him. Be assured that in the event my son is denied a diploma because of the Exit Exam, in the event his entire life potential is taken away by a system that is flawed and prejudiced against him, I will exhaust all remedies to secure monetary compensation that comfortably secures [REDACTED]'s well being for his lifetime and I will seek and obtain all punitive damages allowed by law.

Respectfully submitted,

[REDACTED]